Preface

Increasingly, students with disabilities and learning differences are in general education classrooms, and teachers are searching for ways to help them meet high academic standards and achieve success. While many recognize that a teacher's expertise is often the critical determinant in any student's achievement, they also realize that meeting the increasingly diverse needs of students calls for additional information and support. In this regard, teachers need easy and simple access to authentic information about teaching and responding to individual differences effectively.

Effective Teaching

63 Tactics for Teaching Diverse Learners, Grades 6–12 is a collection of evidence-based practices designed to help teachers address the instructional needs present in America's classrooms. The book is organized around four components of effective instruction: planning, managing, delivering, and evaluating (cf. Algozzine & Ysseldyke, 1992; Algozzine, Ysseldyke, & Elliott, 1997). It is based on a fundamental belief: teachers are able to respond to individual differences more effectively when provided with an easily accessible resource of effective teaching tips.

63 Tactics for Teaching Diverse Learners, Grades 6–12 provides all teachers (regardless of level, experience, or area of specialization) with access to effective instructional tactics. In developing this book, we used a peer review process that encouraged flexibility and resulted in a collection of teaching activities that help teachers to meet the needs of students in diverse classroom and school settings. *63 Tactics for Teaching Diverse Learners, Grades 6–12* is based on sound models of instruction, and its structure encourages the identification and use of practices that are effective for students with or without disabilities, as well as practices that are designed especially for students with disabilities at middle and secondary grade levels.

Ecological Validity

Ecological validity refers to the extent to which the underlying constructs of an educational model are grounded in logical, representative, and important conditions within the real world of schools. It is a measure of the value, worth, or projected effectiveness of the model. The ecological validity or usefulness of the activities is grounded in considering five assumptions:

1. All children want to learn.
   Ask any child.

2. All children can learn.
   Ask any parent.

3. All schools can educate diverse groups of students.
   Ask any administrator.

4. All classrooms are places where students with varying instructional needs can learn.
   Ask any teacher.

5. All teachers want to teach well so students will learn and succeed; all they need is time, access to information, and sustained support.
   Ask anybody.

Underlying Model

63 Tactics for Teaching Diverse Learners 6–12 is based on a practical model in which four components (i.e., planning, managing, delivering, and evaluating) serve as the base for a set of organizing principles of effective teaching and instruction (see below). The model is grounded in a large and well-accepted body of research on effective teaching. To bring it to life and address the ever-present concern of administrators and teachers for assistance when students fail to profit from instruction, each component and principle is embodied by a set of strategies that represent plans for action in putting theory into practice (see example).

Strategies are steps that should be taken to implement principles and components of effective instruction; they are the "what" of teaching. Tactics are the "how" of teaching—the actions that a teacher can take to influence learning. Tactics are the lowest level a component can be broken into for instructional purposes; they are specific behaviors or teaching activities (see organizational relations).

Components and Principles of Effective Teaching and Instruction

Component	Principle
Planning	Decide What to Teach Decide How to Teach Communicate Realistic Expectations
Managing	Prepare for Instruction Use Time Productively Establish Positive Environments
Delivering	Present Information Monitor Presentations Adjust Presentations
Evaluating	Monitor Student Understanding Monitor Engaged Time Keep Records of Student Progress Use Data to Make Decisions

SOURCE: Algozzine, Ysseldyke, & Elliott (1997)

Example of Key Aspects of Model Underlying Structure of Our Book

Component	Principle	Strategy
Planning	Decide What to Teach	Assess to Identify Gaps in Performance Establish Logical Sequences of Instruction Consider Contextual Variables
	Decide How to Teach	Set Instructional Goals Establish Performance Standards Choose Instructional Methods and Materials Establish Grouping Structures Pace Instruction Appropriately Monitor Performance and Replan Instruction
	Communicate Realistic Expectations	Teach Goals, Objectives, and Standards Teach Students to Be Active, Involved Learners Teach Students Consequences of Performance

SOURCE: Algozzine, Ysseldyke, & Elliott (1997)

Organizational Relations in Algozzine and Ysseldyke Model	
Component:	Delivering Instruction
Principle:	Monitor Presentations
Strategy:	Provide Prompts and Cues
Tactic:	*Use Signals to Request Help:* Develop a signal for each student to use when assistance is needed during an independent practice session. Circulate through the room when students are practicing and look for signs that someone needs help. Provide help as quickly as possible so that students can continue to work.

SOURCE: Algozzine, Ysseldyke, & Elliott (1997)

Algozzine and Ysseldyke (1992) and Algozzine et al. (1997) used the model as a base for a collection of evidence-based tactics to help teachers teach more effectively. In *63 Tactics for Teaching Diverse Learners, Grades 6–12*, we have compiled additional tactics drawn from review of professional publications and from extensive observations of experienced teachers and other professionals who teach students with disabilities and diverse learning needs in general education classrooms. We grouped them according to the components and principles of effective instruction identified by Algozzine and Ysseldyke (see below).

Components, Principles, and Strategies for Effective Instruction

Component	Principle	Strategy
Planning Instruction	Decide What to Teach	Assess to Identify Gaps in Performance Establish Logical Sequences of Instruction Consider Contextual Variables

Component	Principle	Strategy
	Decide How to Teach	Set Instructional Goals Establish Performance Standards Choose Instructional Methods and Materials Establish Grouping Structures Pace Instruction Appropriately Monitor Performance and Replan Instruction
	Communicate Realistic Expectations	Teach Goals, Objectives, and Standards Teach Students to Be Active, Involved Learners Teach Students Consequences of Performance
Managing Instruction	Prepare for Instruction	Set Classroom Rules Communicate and Teach Classroom Rules Communicate Consequences of Behavior Handle Disruptions Efficiently Teach Students to Manage Their Own Behavior
	Use Time Productively	Establish Routines and Procedures Organize Physical Space Allocate Sufficient Time to Academic Activities
	Establish Positive Classroom Environments	Make the Classroom a Pleasant, Friendly Place Accept Individual Differences Establish Supportive, Cooperative Learning Environments Create a Nonthreatening Learning Environment
Delivering Instruction	Present Information	*Presenting Content* Gain and Maintain Attention Review Prior Skills or Lessons Provide Organized, Relevant Lessons
		Motivating Students Show Enthusiasm and Interest Use Rewards Effectively Consider Level and Student Interest
		Teaching Thinking Skills Model Thinking Skills Teach Fact-Finding Skills Teach Divergent Thinking Teach Learning Strategies
		Providing Relevant Practice Develop Automaticity Vary Opportunities for Practice Vary Methods of Practice Monitor Amount of Work Assigned

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Component	Principle	Strategy
	Monitor Presentations	*Providing Feedback* Give Immediate, Frequent, Explicit Feedback Provide Specific Praise and Encouragement Model Correct Performance Provide Prompts and Cues Check Student Understanding
		Keeping Students Actively Involved Monitor Performance Regularly Monitor Performance During Practice Use Peers to Improve Instruction Provide Opportunities for Success Limit Opportunities for Failure Monitor Engagement Rates
	Adjust Presentations	Adapt Lessons to Meet Student Needs Provide Varied Instructional Options Alter Pace
Evaluating Instruction	Monitor Student Understanding	Check Understanding of Directions Check Procedural Understanding Monitor Student Success Rate
	Monitor Engaged Time	Check Student Participation Teach Students to Monitor Their Own Participation
	Keep Records of Student Progress	Teach Students to Chart Their Own Progress Regularly Inform Students of Performance Maintain Records of Student Performance
	Use Data to Make Decisions	Use Data to Decide if More Services Are Warranted Use Student Progress to Make Teaching Decisions Use Student Progress to Decide When to Discontinue Services

SOURCE: Algozzine & Ysseldyke (1992); Algozzine, Ysseldyke, & Elliott (1997)

63 Tactics for Teaching Diverse Learners, Grades 6–12 is based on a fundamental belief: *teachers are able to respond to individual differences more effectively when provided with an easily accessible resource of effective tactics. 63 Tactics for Teaching Diverse Learners, Grades 6–12* responds to two fundamental problems in education: regardless of certification area, (1) very few teachers receive sufficient experience during student teaching or practicum experiences in identifying or using evidence-based tactics of effective instruction, and (2) very few teachers receive instruction in or have access to specific tactics for addressing instructional diversity and meeting individual needs in their classrooms.

63 Tactics for Teaching Diverse Learners, Grades 6–12 also responds to a widespread need in today's middle and secondary classrooms. Most teachers agree: they often do not have enough time to meet all the needs of all their students effectively. Thus, time is an ongoing and primary need. *63 Tactics for Teaching Diverse Learners, Grades 6–12* addresses this need

by providing teachers with quick access to reliable information about effective instructional tactics, regardless of their area of expertise or the diverse needs of their students. When using the book, teachers have several options:

- Identifying a problem and searching for solutions using the model of effective instruction, grade level, content area, category of student disability, and/or type of student learning difference.
- Searching the database without referencing a problem or any aspects of it.
- Examining the knowledge base underlying each tactic.
- Saving items from the database for later use.
- Implementing tactics.
- Evaluating and revising instructional plans using information in the database.

Where to Go From Here

Teachers are faced daily with questions that must be addressed if they are to be effective with all children.

I teach students in a large urban high school. My specialty is history and mathematics. How can I develop appropriate learning activities for a student with learning disabilities? How can I arrange my instruction to accommodate students with a deficit in short-term memory? How can I improve my ongoing assessment of student learning? How do I use data to make decisions?

63 Tactics for Teaching Diverse Learners, Grades 6–12 helps teachers to associate a problem with an easily accessible set of solutions. It helps teachers move from questions to answers in a rapid and organized manner. It is unique in that we not only provide classroom-tested tactics for effective instruction for students with disabilities, but we also substantiate them with relevant and related literature. Thus, teachers can be assured of implementing evidence-based practices grounded in ongoing research. We also provide feedback, comments, and examples from practicing teachers who offer practical suggestions as to how the tactic might be modified and/or enhanced in terms of its content or application.